

## ***Officials Appreciation Week Profile:***

# **Tom Concannon**

Tom Concannon is someone who participated in multiple sports while growing up.

Those interests, in turn, have resulted in a multi-sport officiating career in football, cross country and track and field.

“As a child, I played youth football and coached youth teams as a teenager,” he said. “I also became an advance scout for a local high school football team. While coaching youth football in 1979, I was approached by some officials who thought I had the skills that would make me a decent official. Within a few years, I became a NJSIAA varsity official and was on the field until 2017, when heart surgery shifted gears for me, and I’ve been a clock operator ever since.”

His track and field experience, meanwhile, was a pathway into officiating the other sports.

“I was a thrower on a nationally-ranked college track team when I attended Camden County College,” he said. “I threw javelin and occasionally shot put and considered myself a ‘spare part’ on those talent-laden teams in 1971 and 1972. Work restrictions prevented me from becoming a track and field official until 2009. I was very fortunate to be mentored by the late Warren Martin, who showed me how to do each event the right way. Being fair and consistent at any level was his message, and I have followed that my entire career.”

Football fields and cross country/track venues aren’t the only place you’ll find Concannon. For the past 15 years, he’s also worked as a timer at the NJSIAA wrestling championships.

### **Getting to know NJSIAA sports official Tom Concannon:**

#### ***What do you enjoy most about being an official:***

“I enjoy the camaraderie of working with fellow extraordinary officials and watching exceptional athletes compete from level-to-level, high school to Olympics.”

#### ***Do you have a favorite memory from officiating an event?***

“My favorite memory is being congratulated by coaches and athletes after a job well done at the Meet of Champions.”

#### ***What’s the best part about any given day of officiating?***

“The best part of any given day of officiating is seeing the smile on an athlete’s face when they excel at their event.”



***Do you have any memories from your first event as an official?***

“At my first meet as an official, I remember being nervous and wanted to make sure I used the stopwatch correctly to accurately record the times.”

***Do you have a funny memory of an interaction between yourself and an athlete or coach?***

“Over the years, I have been known to use the phrase ‘The Circle Is Yours’ for throwing events. One year at the Penn Relays, an international athlete did not understand what I meant due to language barriers and their coach had to motion for him to begin. That athlete is now the reigning Olympic champion in the discus.”

***What’s the biggest misconception about the job of being an official?***

“The biggest misconception about the job of being an official is that it is not worth the effort. However, I believe if you are passionate, and if athletes and coaches feel you are a professional and consistent, they will respect your efforts all the time.”

***What would you say to anyone thinking about becoming an official?***

“It is very rewarding when you walk away from the events at the end of the day and someone says ‘Thank you.’”

***Think you might be interested in becoming a high school sports official?  
Check out this link to learn more: <https://www.njsiaa.org/officials/become-official>***